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U. S. Department of Agriculture

DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of October 5, 1942

(To be mimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents)

Monday - Cooking on Low. With food playing the important role it does in war, it is necessary today that none of it be spoiled by poor cooking. Although some foods need high heat and fast cooking, low heat is the secret of success of many dishes. Take eggs, for instance. Fried, scrambled, poached eggs, eggs in custards, souffles, meringues, and in sponge and angel-food cake, all should be cooked at low heat, and "boiled" eggs should be simmered. Cheese, milk, fish, meat and poultry, and dried beans, should cook at low heat. Cakes made with chocolate, molasses, and honey need lower heat for baking because these ingredients scorch easily. Large cakes should bake in a slower oven than smaller cup cakes and layer cake, and loaves of bread need lower heat than muffins or biscuits.

Tuesday - Question Box. Today's questions are about wartime food problems. The first is from a housewife who asks for suggestions for nut loaf to be used on meatless days. Home economists suggest that you can work out your own recipes if you chop the nuts and mix them with chopped vegetables, some cereal food like rice or bread crumbs, and a thick sauce to bind the loaf together. The loaf will be especially good if you use one crisp chopped vegetable in the mixture, like celery, green pepper, or carrots. Peanut and carrot loaf made with bread crumbs and tomato sauce for a binder is a good and inexpensive nut loaf. Another is pecan and rice loaf. You can get recipes for these and others in the publication "Nuts and How To Use Them," No. 302, from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. The second question is on drying parsley and celery leaves for seasoning. Scientists say to dry them as you would dry other herbs. Gather them when the leaves are fully mature, wash and tie in bundles. Hang in a dry, dust-free room with good air circulation. When thoroughly dry, remove coarse stems and store leaves in glass jar with top that screws on tight. Label, and keep in cool, dry place. The third question: "Is there more vitamin C in bean sprouts than in the dried beans from which they come?" Nutrition scientists say "Yes." In the case of soybeans, the dry ones have no vitamin C but the sprouts are an excellent source. The next question is from a gardener: "Which is the best time for setting out fruit trees for the home garden - fall or spring?" Horticulturists say the best time for planting in northern States is probably as early in the spring as the ground can be worked. In southern States where the ground does not freeze, you can set out fruit trees during the winter.

Wednesday - Heating With Wood. Because they have trees on their land that need cutting and make excellent wood for burning, many farm families won't need to worry about fuel shortages in their homes. Crooked, diseased, and dead trees in farm woodlands make fine fuelwood. If these trees are removed, the rest have a better chance to grow into more valuable timber. Moisture in wood is the most important factor influencing the heating value. When you season the wood before burning it, you dry it out and increase the heating value. To get the most value from stove wood or furnace wood, cut it short enough to lie flat in the fuel chamber. To get a hot fire, pack several sticks closely, side by side, with only narrow air spaces between them. The heat reflected from one to the other helps drive off

moisture and holds the proper rate of burning. When using wood in a coal furnace, it is best to combine it with coal if possible. If wood alone is used, there should be a check damper in the smoke pipe. A farmer might construct his own wood-burning furnace of brick, using little new metal material except pipes for smoke outlets and air ducts. One or more large oil drums can serve as the firebox, and discarded articles can supply the other parts.

Thursday - Question Box. October 10 is National Fire Prevention Day and the beginning of National Fire Prevention Week, so today's questions have been chosen because they are on the subject of preventing fires in the home. The first letter asks: "Can you tell me a simple way to fireproof clothing, curtains, and other household fabrics?" To fireproof any cotton fabric that water won't hurt, dip it in a solution of 7 ounces of borax, 3 ounces of boric acid, and 2 quarts of hot water. The cloth must be dry when dipped, and will require redipping each time after washing. The second question is - "What are the right clothes for an emergency firefighting outfit?" You might assemble an outfit from any of the following: overcoat, wool trousers, overalls, coveralls, heavy work shirt, wool shirt, denim jacket, leather jacket, sweater, hunter's cap or fireman's cap, felt or fabric hat, leather gloves, high-topped shoes, wool or cotton socks. Whatever clothes are selected, they should cover the skin, ward off flames from the face and eyes, and be fire-resistant in themselves. Treat the cotton articles with the solution of borax, boric acid, and water. Wool, leather, or fur-felt will not absorb much of this solution; however, they don't burn easily anyway. California extension workers emphasize these points - A hat that fits well down on the head to protect the hair, with a brim to protect the eyes, shirt tucked in well, a close-fitting collar or neckband, pockets with flaps to keep out hot embers, no cuffs on overall trousers. Coveralls should be close-fitting at the ankles. Wear high-topped shoes and thick socks. Keep a woolen blanket or fireproofed cotton blanket in a handy place in the house, for use in smothering flames. A housewife asks "Which are the most likely starting points for fires in a house?" Defective flues and stovepipe connections cause more than any other single factor. Before starting the furnace this fall, have the chimney inspected for cracks, loose bricks, and protection from nearby wooden construction. Stovepipes should be a least 18 inches away from wooden walls, shelves, or other construction and should never run through floors or closets. If they have to go through a partition, use an insulated or ventilated metal collar. Have spark arresters on top of the chimney, and fire-resistant roofing if possible. A lightning rod is added protection. A metal-covered door at the top of the cellar stair will help hold back a fire starting in the basement. A door on the second floor opening onto a flat-top roof offers escape if caught upstairs. There are many other possible fire precautions, but these are a few of the most important ones.

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DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of October 12, 1942

(To be mimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents)

Monday - Bedtime for Late Crops. This story is for gardeners and housewives who are "putting to bed", for the winter, their late garden crops - vegetables and fruits. Scientists explain that when we store vegetables for use in cold weather, we are really putting them to sleep. Only the firm, sturdy, dry vegetables, mature but not too old, are suitable for storing. Late varieties are better than early ones. Only those with no signs of disease, decay, bruises, or breaks will keep well. A good storage cellar has good ventilation, is dark and clean. Temperature and moisture are also important. Some crops keep best where it is cold and moist, others where it is warm and dry. Crops such as apples, pears, and celery, can't be stored with others because they absorb odors. For more information on this subject write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., and ask for bulletin No. 879, "Home Storage of Vegetables."

Tuesday - Question Box. A housewife wants scientific evidence that green leaves of lettuce and cabbage have more food value than white bleached leaves. A recent study shows that the green leaves contain from one and a half to three times as much iron as the bleached white leaves, and about three times as much calcium. As for the vitamins, the green leaves of cabbage had 21 times more carotene than the bleached inner leaves, and one-half more vitamin C. A second housewife asks if onions help supply vitamin C. Investigations have proved that onions help very little in supplying vitamin C. When fresh from the garden and eaten raw they are quite rich in this vitamin, but, in storage, much is lost. More loss occurs when onions are cooked. Their chief value is to give flavor to winter meals. The third question: Are greenhouse tomatoes as rich in vitamin C as the garden variety? In the Utah Experiment Station, workers found that greenhouse tomatoes were only about one-half as rich in vitamin C as Garden tomatoes. From a housewife living in the mountains comes another question: Does altitude affect canning spoilage? Elevation does affect the reading of the gauge on the pressure canner, so the time and temperature for safe canning differ at every thousand feet. One should follow a table for correct time and pressure according to altitude, and have the pressure gauge tested for accuracy each year.

Wednesday - Cranberries. Fresh cranberries are here. These tart red berries dress up winter appetites and "pep up" meals and add much to Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. About one-fourth of this year's crop may go to our boys in camp. And since cranberries are an ideal accompaniment for roast chicken and turkey they will do their part on the home front too. Cranberries contain vitamin C and, when served fresh, they retain more of their vitamin content. They combine well with sugar-savers, such as corn, maple syrup, or honey. The cranberries will appear in bulk on the market because of lack of tin. They can be made into pies, pudding, cobbler, meat loaf, shortcake, or Christmas punch, not to mention the various kinds of sauce that can be made with them. Use cranberry juice as an appetizer alone, or mixed with other fruit juices, cider, or ginger ale.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today is from a housewife and is about rubber: What are some simple rules for taking care of the family's rubber overshoes and galoshes? Home economists say if overshoes and galoshes are soiled or muddy, wash them in cool water, using soap if necessary. Rinse off the soap and dry with a cloth or in cool, dry air. Stuff the rubber overshoes loosely with newspaper. Put them away in a dark, cool place. The second question: "Can I do anything to bring back rubber soles that have become soft and sticky?" The answer is, no. After rubber becomes soft, sticky, and weak, or hard and brittle, it is beyond repair. To keep it from getting in this condition, rubber should be protected from heat, light, grease and oil, dry-cleaning fluids, copper, and unnecessary strain and wear. The third question on rubber: Is it possible to mend a small hole in the sole of an otherwise good overshoe? The answer is, yes. Repair it as you would the leak in an inner tube of a tire, by the "cold patch method." Cut a patch larger than the hole, clean the sole of the shoe around the hole, rough up the rubber around the hole with sandpaper, and then apply the rubber cement around the hole. Let it stand a few minutes, then apply another coat. Put on the rubber patch carefully, pressing it firmly. Hold it on tight until the cement hardens. Another housewife asks, Is there any way to keep rubber gloves from sticking together on the inside? Home economists say dusting with talcum or cornstarch is a protection whenever rubber surfaces come together. This can be used with rubber sheets where they lie folded together, or rubber aprons or bathing caps. The last question today is from a home gardener: Does it really pay to save leaves and other waste for next year's garden? Fertilizer specialists of the Department of Agriculture say that bonfires are a waste of valuable plant food, and until the war is over there is urgent need of getting full value from wastes which can, in part, take the place of some of the nitrogen fertilizer materials now going into explosives. So, instead of being raked into a pile and burned, the leaves should go into a compost heap, be kept moist, and be turned occasionally until the material is well enough rotted for use. Almost any organic materials that will decay make fair substitutes for fertilizer.

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DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of October 19, 1942

(To be mimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents)

Monday - Womanpower on the Farm. Stories from all over the country tell how womanpower is replacing the manpower that is being taken from the farms to help in building an Army and Navy. From Utah comes the story of Mrs. Lydia Dopp, the mother of 11 children. She has one son in the service and two in war industries. From their 37 acres of farming land this year, the Dops produced 11 acres of alfalfa; 8 acres of feed grain; 3 acres of sugar beets; 1 acre of tomatoes for canning; 3 acres of corn for silage; and 1 acre of pasture. Four heifers and thirty-one hogs have been added to their livestock and 100 new layers to the poultry flock. The garden was increased from a quarter of an acre to an acre, so it would feed more than just their family. In Colorado one farm woman, since the death of her husband, is carrying on a dairy business that has been in the family for three generations. Her son and a hired man do the milking and she tends the milk house, the milk route, and purchases the feed. In Saline County, Nebraska, Czech women are helping their husbands thresh grain. City cousins of the rural Czech women help with the harvest too. Mrs. Victor Kasl was helping her husband in the field, but she couldn't do all the shocking, keep up two Victory Gardens, and tend the chickens and cows. Two women from a nearby town volunteered to help. By working part of 2 days they "finished off" 15 acres of small grain. Then there are two young school teachers in Michigan who run a 222-acre farm in Branch County. Irene Brown and Kathryn Gaylord met while in college and have been friends and partners since. They are proud of the fact that they require the assistance of a man during haying and harvesting season only. With the aid of a tractor they raise wheat, corn, spelt, barley, and alfalfa; feed about 12 head of beef cattle; have about 60 pigs, 2 work horses, chickens, geese, and cows for milking. And in a Indiana city, housewives and schoolgirls sort, peel, pack, and salt tomatoes. Skilled workers from defense plants nearby repair any breakdowns of machinery in the canning plants and in their off hours help peel and sort tomatoes. On Sundays and holidays they pile into buses and work 8 to 10 hours on their off days to save the abundant crop of tomatoes intended for the Nation's armed forces.

Tuesday - Question Box. The first letter today inquires about keeping apples. The writer has had trouble keeping them in the basement. Horticulturists of the Department say you can't expect to keep apples in a warm basement. They need a cold moist place for storage. If the cellar is too warm, the apples could be stored in straw in an outdoor pit, or kept covered on an outdoor porch or in an unheated garage until heavy **freezing**. Another housewife wants to know whether apples and winter pears keep better spread on shelves in the cellar or left in baskets or boxes. Apples probably keep better in boxes or bushel baskets because they need moisture, but pears keep better wrapped in paper and spread out on shelves. The third question is: "Why is it better to store cabbage heads upside down than the way they grow?" They should be stored upside down so the moisture will drain out of the head and not start a rot. Another housewife asks how she can keep celery and endive fresh in the cellar in winter. The answer is - dig up the plants in the garden as if for transplanting, taking all the roots

and plenty of soil. Set them close together in moist earth in the cellar. They will keep several weeks this way. Another question: "Please tell me which vegetables are successfully preserved in salt." Cabbage, of course, is easily preserved as sauerkraut. Housewives also keep snap beans, sweet corn, and cauliflower by brining or salting. The last question today: "Is it true that one way to save tomatoes from frost is to bring the whole tomato vine indoors?" Yes, when frost threatens, pull the vines and hang them in a dry, moderately light storage place. Use the ripe tomatoes at once. The ones that are well developed but not ripe will ripen and take on color from the food materials in the vine.

Wednesday - Apples for Autumn Meals. For the second time this fall, apples are designated as a Victory Food Special. Winter apples get the Victory Special listing from October 22 through Hallowe'en. Here are ten good ways to make use of them on the home front. First, washed and polished and eaten out of hand. Second, as a salad, combined with chopped celery, nuts, and salad dressing or mixed with shredded cabbage. Third, as apple sauce. Fourth, baked. Wash and core without cutting through to the stem end. Fill center with sugar or corn sirup. Add butter and chopped nuts. Put in covered baking dish and bake in moderate oven. Fifth, apple pie. If you have a freshly baked or cold apple pie on hand, cover the top with American cheese, grated or cut into thin slices. Put in moderate oven until the cheese melts. Serve at once. Sixth, fried. For a different dish, fry sliced apples and sliced onions together. Seven, brown betty. Eight, scalloped with sweetpotatoes or cabbage. Nine, apples with pork chops. Skewer with a toothpick one-half of a cored unpared apple on top of each browned chop. Cover and bake 30 to 45 minutes in moderate oven. And tenth, apples for Hallowe'en as cider, jack o'lantern baked apples or other dessert, or bob for fresh apples.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today: "What flavors go best with avocados in a salad?" Since avocados are so rich, they should be combined with an acid fruit, such as grapefruit sections, oranges, tomatoes, and tart apples. Another homemaker writes: "Would a meal be nourishing enough with just a substantial soup and a dessert?" Yes, if the soup contains a generous supply of dried legumes - peas, beans, or lentils - and if plenty of vegetables are in it. Some meat adds flavor and extra protein value to the soup, for example, a little chopped ham or bacon, or pieces of cooked frankfurter. And now for another question. "Is evaporated milk ever used in cooking without diluting or thinning with water?" Yes, when you want to make a food extra nourishing, or get children to take more milk when they do not drink enough. Use evaporated milk "straight" in puddings and milk soups, or in bread. The next letter asks: "Would it be too much of an undertaking to reline an old winter coat myself? Where could I get directions?" It is not particularly difficult to reline a coat and you can get detailed directions for each step of the job by writing to the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. The last question today is this - "What is the best kind of shoes for war workers?" The home economists say, get sturdy, simple, well-fitting shoes with moderate or low heels, and keep them in good condition. If possible have two pairs, and wear them alternately, always keeping the second pair on shoetrees when not in use.

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DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of October 26, 1942

(To be mimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents)

Monday - More Heat and Less Fuel. Here are some heat-saving tips from housing engineers of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. First, have the furnace or heating equipment in good condition. Second, fire the furnace properly. Give the equipment a checkup at least once a year, and learn to fire it with the help of a free bulletin, Heating the Farm Home, No. 1698, from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. When the furnace is all set, take a look over the house and consider ways to make it hold heat. Since heat tends to rise, the upperpart of the house should be insulated to prevent loss. Heat also moves toward cold, so you can save heat by sealing cracks and openings, by weather stripping doors and windows, or by installing storm windows and doors. Take care that doors are not left ajar. A good basement saves loss of heat from the floor. But a house built on piers so that air blows underneath should have floor insulation or a continuous foundation under it. Old people, sick people, and children under 4 need warm rooms, but most others can adjust to cooler rooms and a sweater. You can also save heat by keeping it turned off in bedrooms or little used rooms.

Tuesday - Question Box. The first question today is: "Can you tell me why horseradish I put up only this fall has turned dark?" Plant scientists suggest that the trouble may be the kind of vinegar used. Cider vinegar should not be used -- only white wine or distilled vinegar of 4-1/2 or 5 percent acid content. And when put up in this way, horseradish may be kept only a few weeks. The second question: "Is it possible to make a cranberry pie with gelatin; that is, a chiffon pie?" Yes, here is the recipe. Three cups of cranberries, 1 cup hot water, 1 cup sugar, 1/4 teaspoon salt, 2 eggs, 1/4 cup cold water, 1-1/2 tablespoons gelatin, and 2 tablespoons powdered sugar. Boil the berries in the hot water until they are soft. Press through sieve, add sugar, salt, and well-beaten yolks of eggs. Cook over hot water for a few minutes. Soak gelatin in cold water, then dissolve it in the hot mixture. Chill the mixture and when it begins to set, fold in egg whites beaten stiff with powdered sugar. Blend thoroughly. This mixture will be just enough to fill a 9-inch crust. Chill until firm. Now for the third question: "Can you tell me how to remove a medicine spot from a wool skirt?" Because of the variety of substances used in medicines, it is impossible to give methods for removing all such stains. A tarry or gummy medicine can be treated in the same way as a tar spot, and a medicine containing much iron can be treated in the same way as iron rust. The new bulletin, Stain Removal From Fabrics, Home Methods, No. 1474, will help with the problem. It can be had by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Now for the fourth question: "Please tell me the difference in cooking plain dried apples and sulphured apples." Sulphured apples may be used in much the same way as dried apples, except that less water is required for cooking and they do not need to be soaked. And the last question: "Does the brown russet on the rind of some oranges harm the juice?" Scientists of the Department say russetting of the rind does not affect the quality of the juice much, or the amount of vitamin C it contains. The russetting is usually caused by the rust mite, or by the smooth melanose disease, but the effect is unimportant.

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Wednesday - Dress Warmly This Winter. Indoor temperatures will be lower in many homes this fall and winter because of the fuel situation, so we shall need to dress warmly for colder weather. Use shawls, lap robes, and slacks when necessary. Preparing for the cold months need not mean buying a lot of new clothes, but it may mean looking over what you have with special care to provide extra garments for each member of the family. Perhaps sleeveless sweaters for the men and boys, a quilted vest or jacket for the women and girls, or an old-fashioned shawl for grandmother, warmer underwear, and nightwear, sweaters, slacks, and warm socks when there is studying to be done. Old sweaters can be darned, worn sleeves cut off and the edges bound, large sweaters cut down. If you suffer from cold feet you can wear wool or heavy cotton socks over your regular hose, or wear slacks. Knitted underwear that covers the legs and the midriff is a great help. Cutting-flannel sheets for winter are warmer feeling than muslin. One way to go to bed with warm feet is to put a hot stone or flatiron or hot-water bottle in the bed half an hour before bedtime, and to wear bedsocks. We can beat the cold if we try.

Thursday - Question Box. The first letter today asks about eggs. "I have used duck eggs in cooking, but I never see them on sale. And what about eating the eggs of geese, guinea, and turkeys?" You can eat or cook with any of these eggs and they taste much the same as the hen's eggs. Goose and turkey eggs are usually offered for sale only for hatching. Duck and guinea eggs are marketed to a limited extent. The next letter asks: "Wouldn't it be a good idea now when the meat supply is short for people to raise domestic rabbits?" Rabbit raising is already highly developed in the Western States. The supply of rabbits on the market depends on the locality. There is no reason why more rabbit meat should not be eaten. The domestic rabbits are larger and more tender than wild ones because they are marketed at an early age. They are also free from the disease tularemia, which has kept wild rabbits off the market in many areas. All the meat on a domestic rabbit is white and delicately flavored. It can be cooked in practically the same ways as chicken. Broil, fry, make a casserole or rabbit pie, chop suey, salad, or a la king of older rabbits. And now for a request about rice. "Please suggest some good, hearty dishes made with rice." Chicken rizotto is made with chicken and rice; then there are rice with oysters, baked eggs and rice in tomato sauce, vegetable curry with rice, rice meat loaf, baked onions and rice with cheese, rice and red beans, rice with minced ham and shrimp. The last question today is on washing machines. "What is the best way to clean and care for a washing machine?" When you finish washing, let out the water and lift out the agitator. Wash this piece, including the inside which fits over the stem, rinse and wipe dry. Clean the wringer next. Release the pressure on the rolls with warm soapy water and rinse with clear water. Wipe dry. Leave the pressure adjustment released so the rolls do not touch each other. Wash the inside of the tub with warm soapy water. Get all the lint from the dirt screen. Flush the drain with clear water, drain all the water from the rubber hose. Leave drain-valve open to air and dry but put all other parts except the agitator in place ready for the next wash. Lay the agitator in the bottom of the tub, leave the lid partly open for ventilation. A slip cover of muslin or oilcloth over the whole machine will protect the parts from grit and dust.